

H 37 providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member; and  
fixing a first portion of the tissue to a second portion of the tissue to secure the tissue to  
the deformable member.

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. This Supplemental Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 supplements the Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 filed May 8, 2003. This Supplemental Amendment corrects alleged deficiencies in the amendment format, which were noted in an Office communication dated May 28, 2003 and during subsequent teleconferences between the undersigned and the Examiner.

Applicant's undersigned representative appreciates the courtesy extended by Examiner Thaler during the personal interview on May 6, 2003.

Claims 1-26, 28-51, 53-72, 74-96, and 98-201 are pending in the application. Claims 27, 52, 73, and 97 have been canceled.

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 1-21, 33-35, 38-42, 48, 58-60, 64, 65, 79, 80, 84-88, 92, 93, 103-105, 109, and 110 is acknowledged with appreciation. Claims 33, 34, 38, 41, 48, 58, 59, 64, 65, 79, 80, 84, 87, 92, 93, 103, 104, 109, and 110 have been rewritten in independent form and, consequently, are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 35, 39, 40, 42, 60, 85, 86, 88, and 105, which the Examiner also indicated contain allowable subject matter, each depend from at least one of those independent claims and thus are in condition for allowance.

Though the Examiner rejected dependent claim 81, it is nevertheless believed to be in condition for allowance because it depends from allowable claim 80.

Claims 173 to 201 have been added. These new claims correspond to allowable claims 33-35, 38-42, 48, 58-60, 64, 65, 79, 80, 84-88, 92, 93, 103-105, 109, and 110, respectively, except the preamble of each of the new claims has been slightly modified by deleting the word "passageway," and one claim has been altered with respect to the recitation of a delivery sheath.

The support for these new claims is apparent in the original specification. These new claims are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as allowable claims 33-35, 38-42, 48, 58-60, 64, 65, 79, 80, 84-88, 92, 93, 103-105, 109, and 110. Claim 189 has also been presented, which corresponds to claim 81. Because claim 81 is believed to be in condition for allowance, as explained above, claim 189 is also believed to be in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the Office objects to the disclosure because reference number 27 is allegedly missing from the drawings. As shown in the attached Supplemental Request for Approval of Drawing Changes, Applicant proposes adding reference number 27 to Figure 4 to overcome this objection.

In the Office Action, the Office rejects claims 22-26, 28-32, 36, 37, 43-47, 49-51, 53-57, 61-63, 66-72, 74-78, 81-83, 89-91, 94-96, 98-102, 106-108, and 111-172 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,693,085 (Buirge).

Independent claims 22, 51, 68, 96, 113, 114, 117, 129, 141, 153, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, and 172 have been amended to recite that the assembly or method includes a blood vessel adjacent an expandable or deformable member or that the assembly includes a blood vessel configured to avoid exposure of an expandable or deformable stent to circulating body fluids. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, in column 12, lines 54-60. In addition, changes were made, not in response to any rejection, but instead to provide a more comprehensive scope of protection. For example, the preamble of certain of the claims has been slightly modified by deleting the word "passageway" (and corresponding changes, if needed, were made to the body of the claims), and certain claims have been altered with respect to the recitation of a delivery sheath. Support for these amended claims is apparent from the original specification.

Buirge does not teach or suggest the claimed assemblies or methods, which each include a blood vessel. In contrast to the present invention, Buirge discloses a stent having a "collagen material," as that term is defined in Buirge. The collagen material is not a blood vessel, as now recited in the pertinent independent claims. Moreover, Applicant sees no suggestion in Buirge for providing a blood vessel.

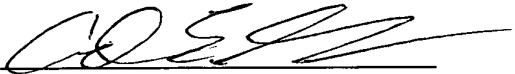
Thus, independent claims 22, 51, 68, 96, 113, 114, 117, 129, 141, 153, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, and 172 are patentable over Buirge. Their dependent claims also are patentable for at least the same reasons.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if the Examiner believes that it would expedite the prosecution of this application.

If Applicant has not accounted for any fees required by this Reply, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the missing fees to our Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If Applicant has not accounted for a required extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, that extension is requested and the corresponding fee should be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

Date June 30, 2003

By 

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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

22. (Thrice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member.

25. (Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the expandable member has a first configuration to allow for insertion of the assembly into a lumen in the body [passageway].

28. (Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

29. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

30. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

31. (Amended) The assembly of claim 30, wherein the portion of the [tissue] blood vessel that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage folds back over a first end of the expandable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

32. (Amended) The assembly of claim 31, wherein the extending portion of the [tissue] blood vessel folds back to form a sleeve.

33. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member,

[The assembly of claim 22,] wherein the tissue has a length about twice as long as the expandable member and forms both an internal lining of the expandable member and an external cover of the expandable member.

34. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and  
a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member,

[The assembly of claim 22,] wherein a first end of the tissue extends beyond a first end of the expandable member and a second end of the tissue extends beyond a second end of the expandable member, and wherein the first and second ends of the tissue both fold back over respective ends of the expandable member to meet about midway between the first and second ends of the expandable member to form an external cover of the expandable member.

<sup>112</sup> 36. (Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel comprises a tubular structure.

<sup>112</sup> 37. (Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel comprises a body tissue.

38. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member,  
wherein the tissue comprises a body tissue,

[The assembly of claim 37,] wherein the body tissue comprises a blood vessel.

41. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member,  
wherein the tissue comprises a tubular structure,

[The assembly of claim 36,] wherein the tubular structure comprises a mammalian blood vessel.

43. (Amended) The assembly of claim 22, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is secured to the expandable member.

44. (Amended) The assembly of claim 43, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is stitched to the expandable member.

45. (Amended) The assembly of claim 43, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is glued to the expandable member.

46. (Amended) The assembly of claim 43, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is welded to the expandable member.

47. (Amended) The assembly of claim 43, wherein a first portion of the [tissue] blood vessel is fixed to a second portion of the [tissue] blood vessel to secure the [tissue] blood vessel to the expandable member.

48. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration;

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member; and

[The assembly of claim 22, further comprising] a delivery sheath which encompasses the expandable member and the tissue.

51. (Thrice Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member.

53. (Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of placing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

54. (Amended) The method of claim 51, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

55. (Amended) The method of claim 54, further comprising the step of placing the [tissue] blood vessel so that a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

56. (Amended) The method of claim 55, further comprising the step of folding the portion of the [tissue] blood vessel that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage back over a first end of the expandable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

57. (Amended) The method of claim 56, further comprising the step of folding the extending portion of the [tissue] blood vessel back to form a sleeve.

58. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member,

wherein the tissue is at least as long as the longitudinal passage;

placing the tissue so that a portion of the tissue extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage; and

folding the portion of the tissue that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage back over a first end of the expandable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member,

[The method of claim 56,] wherein the tissue has a length about twice as long as the expandable member and forms both an internal lining of the expandable member and an external cover of the expandable member.

59. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member, wherein the tissue is at least as long as the longitudinal passage,

[The method of claim 54,] further comprising the steps of:

placing the tissue so that a first end of the tissue extends beyond a first end of the expandable member and a second end of the tissue extends beyond a second end of the expandable member; and

folding back the first and second ends of the tissue over respective ends of the expandable member to meet about midway between the first and second ends of the expandable member to form an external cover of the expandable member.

61. (Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of securing the [tissue] blood vessel to the expandable member.

62. (Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of stitching the [tissue] blood vessel to the expandable member.

63. (Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of gluing the [tissue] blood vessel to the expandable member.

64. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;



providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member; and

[The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of] welding the tissue to the expandable member.

65. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member; and

[The method of claim 51, further comprising the step of] fixing a first portion of the tissue to a second portion of the tissue to secure the tissue to the expandable member.

68. (Thrice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:

a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member.

71. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the deformable member has a first configuration to allow for insertion of the assembly into a lumen in the body [passageway].

74. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

75. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

76. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

77. (Amended) The assembly of claim 76, wherein the portion of the [tissue] blood vessel that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage folds back over a first end of the deformable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

78. (Amended) The assembly of claim 77, wherein the extending portion of the [tissue] blood vessel folds back to form a sleeve.

79. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and  
a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,

[The assembly of claim 68,] wherein the tissue has a length about twice as long as the deformable member and forms both an internal lining of the deformable member and an external cover of the deformable member.

80. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and  
a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,

[The assembly of claim 68,] wherein a first end of the tissue extends beyond a first end of the deformable member and a second end of the tissue extends beyond a second end of the deformable member, and wherein the first and second ends of the tissue both fold back over respective ends of the deformable member to meet about midway between the first and second ends of the deformable member to form an external cover of the deformable member.

81. (Amended) The assembly of claim 80, wherein the first and second ends of the tissue are secured together, secured to the deformable member, or secured to a portion of the tissue adjacent the interior surface of the deformable member.

82. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel comprises a tubular structure.

83. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel comprises a body tissue.

84. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:

a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,  
wherein the tissue comprises a body tissue,

[The assembly of claim 83,] wherein the body tissue comprises a blood vessel.

87. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:

a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,  
wherein the tissue comprises a tubular structure,

[The assembly of claim 82,] wherein the tubular structure comprises a mammalian blood vessel.

89. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is secured to the deformable member.

90. (Amended) The assembly of claim 89, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is stitched to the deformable member.

91. (Amended) The assembly of claim 89, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is glued to the deformable member.

92. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:

a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,  
wherein the tissue is secured to the deformable member,

[The assembly of claim 89,] wherein the tissue is welded to the deformable member.

93. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body passageway comprising:  
a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the  
deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second  
geometrically stable configuration; and  
a tissue disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,  
wherein the tissue is secured to the deformable member,

[The assembly of claim 89,] wherein a first portion of the tissue is fixed to a second portion of the tissue to secure the tissue to the deformable member.

94. (Amended) The assembly of claim 68, further comprising a delivery sheath which [encompasses] facilitates insertion of the deformable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body.

96. (Four Times Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member.

98. (Amended) The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of placing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

99. (Amended) The method of claim 96, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

100. (Amended) The method of claim 99, further comprising the step of placing the [tissue] blood vessel so that a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

101. (Amended) The method of claim 100, further comprising the step of folding the portion of the [tissue] blood vessel that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage

back over a first end of the deformable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

102. (Amended) The method of claim 101, further comprising the step of folding the extending portion of the [tissue] blood vessel back to form a sleeve.

103. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,

wherein the tissue is at least as long as the longitudinal passage;

placing the tissue so that a portion of the tissue extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage; and

folding the portion of the tissue that extends beyond the end of the longitudinal passage back over a first end of the deformable member to a position adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member,

[The method of claim 101,] wherein the tissue has a length about twice as long as the deformable member and forms both an internal lining of the deformable member and an external cover of the deformable member.

104. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member,

wherein the tissue is at least as long as the longitudinal passage;

[The method claim of 99, further comprising steps of:]

placing the tissue so that a first end of the tissue extends beyond a first end of the deformable member and a second end of the tissue extends beyond a second end of the deformable member; and

folding back the first and second ends of the tissue over respective ends of the deformable member to meet about midway between the first and second ends of the deformable member to form an external cover of the deformable member.

106. (Amended) The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of securing the [tissue] blood vessel to the deformable member.

107. (Amended) The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of stitching the [tissue] blood vessel to the deformable member.

108. (Amended) The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of gluing the [tissue] blood vessel to the deformable member.

109. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member; and

[The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of] welding the tissue to the deformable member.

110. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration;

providing a tissue adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member; and

[The method of claim 96, further comprising the step of] fixing a first portion of the tissue to a second portion of the tissue to secure the tissue to the deformable member.

113. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:  
an expandable stent that is expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel configured to avoid exposure of the expandable stent to circulating body fluids when the assembly is inserted into the body [passageway].

114. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:  
a deformable stent that is deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel configured to avoid exposure of the deformable stent to circulating body fluids when the assembly is inserted into the body [passageway].

117. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body to form a portion of a body passageway comprising:

an expandable member that is expandable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the expandable member,

wherein the assembly is constructed such that the assembly forms the portion of the body passageway after expansion of the expandable member.

121. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an interior surface of the expandable member.

122. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

123. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, wherein the expandable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

124. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, wherein the expandable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

125. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is secured to the expandable member.

126. (Amended) The assembly of claim 117, further comprising a delivery sheath which [encompasses] facilitates insertion of the expandable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body.

129. (Twice Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body to form a portion of a body passageway comprising:

a deformable member that is deformable from a first geometrically stable configuration to a second geometrically stable configuration; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the deformable member,

wherein the assembly is constructed such that the assembly forms the portion of the body passageway after deformation of the deformable member.

133. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an interior surface of the deformable member.

134. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is disposed adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

135. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, wherein the deformable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

136. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, wherein the deformable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

137. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is secured to the deformable member.

138. (Amended) The assembly of claim 129, further comprising a delivery sheath which [encompasses] facilitates insertion of the deformable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body.



141. (Amended) A method of forming a portion of a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member;

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the expandable member;

inserting the expandable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body; and

expanding the expandable member subsequent to inserting the expandable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body.

144. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the step of providing the [tissue] blood vessel includes providing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an interior surface of the expandable member.

145. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the step of providing the [tissue] blood vessel includes providing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an exterior surface of the expandable member.

146. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the expandable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

147. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the expandable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

148. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the step of expanding the expandable member causes the expandable member to assume an expanded configuration, and wherein the expandable member in the expanded configuration and the [tissue] blood vessel form the portion of the body passageway.

149. (Amended) The method of claim 141, wherein the step of expanding the expandable member includes expanding the [tissue] blood vessel.

151. (Amended) The method of claim 141, further comprising the step of securing the [tissue] blood vessel to the expandable member.

152. (Amended) The method of claim 141, further comprising the step of [encompassing] providing a delivery sheath to facilitate the insertion of the expandable member and the [tissue] blood vessel [with a delivery sheath] into the body.

153. (Amended) A method of forming a portion of a body passageway comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member;

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the deformable member;

inserting the deformable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body; and

deforming the deformable member subsequent to inserting the deformable member and the [tissue] blood vessel into the body such that the deformable member maintains a deformed configuration.

156. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the step of providing the [tissue] blood vessel includes providing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an interior surface of the deformable member.

157. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the step of providing the [tissue] blood vessel includes providing the [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to an exterior surface of the deformable member.

158. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the deformable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein the [tissue] blood vessel is at least as long as the longitudinal passage.

159. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the deformable member has an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, and wherein a portion of the [tissue] blood vessel extends beyond at least one end of the longitudinal passage.

160. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the deformable member in the deformed configuration and the [tissue] blood vessel form the portion of the body passageway.

161. (Amended) The method of claim 153, wherein the step of deforming the deformable member includes deforming the [tissue] blood vessel.

163. (Amended) The method of claim 153, further comprising the step of securing the [tissue] blood vessel to the deformable member.

164. (Amended) The method of claim 153, further comprising the step of [encompassing] providing a delivery sheath to facilitate the insertion of the deformable member and the [tissue] blood vessel [with a delivery sheath] into the body.

165. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:  
an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable to an extent necessary to secure the expandable member relative to [the] a body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member.

166. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising the steps of:

providing an expandable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the expandable member being expandable to an extent necessary to secure the expandable member relative to [the] a body passageway; and

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the interior surface of the expandable member.

167. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:  
a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable to an extent necessary to secure the deformable member relative to [the] a body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member.

168. (Amended) A method of preparing a graft prosthesis for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising the steps of:

providing a deformable member having an interior surface defining a longitudinal passage, the deformable member being deformable to an extent necessary to secure the deformable member relative to [the] a body passageway; and

providing a [tissue] blood vessel adjacent to the interior surface of the deformable member.

169. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:

an expandable stent that is expandable to an extent necessary to secure the expandable stent relative to [the] a body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel configured to avoid exposure of the expandable stent to circulating body fluids when the assembly is inserted into the body [passageway].

170. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body [passageway] comprising:

a deformable stent that is deformable to an extent necessary to secure the deformable stent relative to [the] a body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel configured to avoid exposure of the deformable stent to circulating body fluids when the assembly is inserted into the body [passageway].

171. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body to form a portion of a body passageway comprising:

an expandable member that is expandable to an extent necessary to secure the expandable member relative to the body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the expandable member,

wherein the assembly is constructed such that the assembly forms the portion of the body passageway after expansion of the expandable member.

172. (Amended) An assembly for insertion into a body to form a portion of a body passageway comprising:

a deformable member that is deformable to an extent necessary to secure the deformable member relative to the body passageway; and

a [tissue] blood vessel disposed adjacent to the deformable member,

wherein the assembly is constructed such that the assembly forms the portion of the body passageway after deformation of the deformable member.